

## NIETZCHE KNEW

You live through stuff you thought  
was going to kill you  
and in a way it does, except  
the person it killed was a different you.  
Someone willing to offer himself up for sacrifice.  
Everybody has one of those.  
But most of us have  
at least one person left after that.  
And this person's different.  
This one's brave enough  
to bang the glass at the Baltimore Aquarium,  
a practice strictly forbidden  
because the vibrations drive the hammerheads half-crazy.  
Slip your hand back in your pocket  
and glance around accusingly.  
Pretend somebody else did it  
even as bubbles slide up  
the sides of the tanks in reproach.

## HAPPILY EVER AFTER

Over the p.a. system comes the announcement that there's  
a lost little boy wearing bright pink sneakers and a  
windbreaker. Would his parents please come to the  
courtesy booth, or contact their nearest security person.  
The crowd listens for awhile, then returns to the bears  
riding bicycles in the center ring. They're balancing  
little red balls on their noses. The p.a. interrupts  
again to say there's a Mazda in the parking lot with its  
lights on. They repeat the license number twice.

Jugglers, sword swallows, then a high-wire act involving  
thirteen chairs and a ten-year-old Rumanian sexpot.

A repeat of the announcement about the Mazda. Then, almost  
as an afterthought, the news that the lost little boy is  
still unclaimed.

Because I'm at the circus, my mood is dangerously upbeat.  
I imagine that when the owners of the Mazda pass the  
courtesy booth on their way to turn out the lights, they  
see the little boy. Their little boy! They didn't even  
realize he was missing! They hug him! Buy him cotton  
candy! Live happily ever after!

— Peter Morris

Lansdale PA